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AUTHOR Gupta, Amit; Tuttle, Tom
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ABSTRACT

This guide, which was developed from a list of work restructuring best practice guidelines that was constructed by nationally recognized work restructuring professionals, businesspersons, and union representatives, is designed to help determine whether a work restructuring consultant has the substantive, process, and interpersonal skills required to help create and facilitate the restructuring of a given workplace. Presented first are a statement of the guide's purpose, overview of its structure, and instructions for using the interview guide. Listed next are the four questions constituting the basis of the interview, which deal with the consultant's qualifications/experience in the following areas: (1) managing change; (2) enhancing company competitiveness; (3) improving departmental efficiency, quality, and effectiveness; and (4) increasing the productivity and contribution of individual employees. Most of the guide is devoted to discussions of the key points that interviewers should expect to hear in a prospective consultant's answers to each question. Also included are the following: interview worksheet; chart for comparing different consultants; discussion of the guide in the context of other available print and Internet resources designed to facilitate work restructuring efforts; and lists of National Workforce Assistance Collaborative advisory groups. (MN)

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WORKFORCE

TOOLS


Prepared by the Maryland Center for Quality and Productivity

WORK RESTRUCTURING INTERVIEW GUIDE

Judging the Quality and Effectiveness of Work Restructuring Consultants

National Alliance of Business

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The National Workforce Assistance Collaborative builds the capacity of the service providers working with small and mid-sized companies in order to help businesses adopt high-performance work practices, become more competitive, and ultimately advance the well-being of their employees. The Collaborative was created with a \$650,000 cooperative agreement grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to the National Alliance of Business. Current partners on the project include the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning, the Institute for the Study of Adult Literacy at The Pennsylvania State University, the Maryland Center for Quality and Productivity, and the National Labor-Management Association. The Collaborative provides assistance in four areas: employee training, labor-management relations, work restructuring, and workplace literacy. For more information, contact Cathy Stewart at the National Alliance of Business, phone: 202/289-2915, fax: 202/289-1303, or e-mail: NWAC@NAB.COM.

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For additional copies of this publication, contact:

National Alliance of Business

Distribution

P.O. Box 501

Annapolis Junction, MD 20702

Phone: 800/787-7788

Fax: 301/206-9789

e-mail: INFO@NAB.COM



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WORK RESTRUCTURING INTERVIEW GUIDE

**June 1996
National Alliance of Business**

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE WORK RESTRUCTURING INTERVIEW GUIDE

This Work Restructuring Interview Guide can be used to determine whether a work restructuring consultant has the substantive, process, and people skills to help create and facilitate a restructuring of your workplace. A successful consultant will have technical expertise in work restructuring, an understanding of how the different units of an organization work together, and the ability to facilitate organizational change. The consultant's effectiveness lies as much in an ability to observe, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate your situation as it does in his or her level of expertise. Therefore, this Interview Guide is designed to help you determine how the consultant would assess and address your problem.

Before talking to any potential consultants, you should take time to think about your objectives and primary concerns, as well as what conditions and terms (i.e., your "customer requirements") are best for establishing an effective working relationship with the consultant. Clarify why your company needs a consultant. Carefully analyze why change is necessary, what needs to be changed, and how change can be implemented, as well as how priority issues would be answered at the organization, department, and individual level. Most likely, you will need to hire a consultant if (1) your company lacks the staff expertise or time to deal with the issues, and (2) you perceive a need for an independent viewpoint and intervention.

You should also assess your readiness to work with a consultant to facilitate change. Are you ready and willing to bear the hidden emotional costs (e.g., perceived loss of control, perceived loss of confidentiality) that often accompany working with a consultant on work restructuring issues? While it may be possible to implement individual work restructuring practices in a short amount of time, work restructuring may involve a multi-year change effort. Do you have the commitment and perseverance to stick with the restructuring effort for the long haul? If you are not committed and willing to make changes, a consultant cannot help your company, no matter how much you think your firm needs assistance.

Work restructuring is a complex set of activities. It encompasses change at all levels — the entire organization, each department, and every individual. In addition, activities at each of these levels must be coordinated and aligned. The more time you take up front to analyze your need for and readiness to work with a consultant, the more likely you are to have a successful experience. If your goal is to generate full commitment to the change effort, we strongly encourage forming a labor-management team to think through these issues. Because leadership commitment is critical to the initiation, sustenance, and success of any change effort, the CEO and top management team should provide visible support by participating on or chartering this team. If the organization has a union, then the union leadership should also be a part of the team.

Before hiring a consultant, you should rigorously interview and screen several candidates for the job. This Interview Guide is provided as a tool to assist you in that screening process. The Interview Guide can be used with a wide variety of work restructuring consultants, including those from community colleges or universities, nonprofit organizations, private consulting firms, and federal or state business development or modernization programs.

Consultants will contact you frequently. However, those who are most aggressive in marketing their services may not be the ones you will want to use. A useful way to find consultants in your area is to ask your peers in other organizations whom they have used. Also, your industry association may have lists of consultants that other members have used. Don't limit your search to those who knock on your door.

WORK RESTRUCTURING

The Interview Guide was developed from a list of Work Restructuring Best Practice Guidelines, constructed by nationally recognized work restructuring professionals, business people, and union representatives. These individuals defined work restructuring as follows:

Work restructuring refers to the changes organizations make in planning, structuring, managing, and executing work in order to improve quality, productivity, cycle time, customer satisfaction, and employee satisfaction.

Work restructuring is the collective set of decisions and processes by which continuous improvements and breakthrough opportunities are accomplished. Leadership creates a collaborative environment and designs work processes so that employees, individually and in teams, can efficiently and effectively anticipate and satisfy customer needs.

INTERVIEW GUIDE STRUCTURE

The Interview Guide is divided into eight sections:

- 1) *Introduction* — Explains the purpose of the Interview Guide, defines work restructuring, and lays out the structure of the Interview Guide.
- 2) *How to Use the Interview Guide* — Provides instruction on using the Interview Guide.
- 3) *Questions* — Introduces the Interview Guide's four questions.
- 4) *Answers* — Discusses the types of answers to look for from the consultants that you interview.
- 5) *Interview Worksheet* — Provides probes to questions and spaces to write responses to each of the four questions.
- 6) *Comparison Chart* — Provides space to compare the merits of four different consultants that you interview.

- 7) *This Interview Guide in Context* — Explains how work restructuring fits within the larger context of workforce and workplace change, and lists other Collaborative products designed to help small and mid-sized companies in their change efforts.
- 8) *Advisory Groups* — Lists the individuals serving on the Collaborative's Advisory Board and Councils.

How to Use the INTERVIEW GUIDE

Before conducting an interview, you should read the Questions and Answers sections of the Interview Guide. These sections will provide you with an enhanced understanding of the questions you might ask and the points that a competent consultant would make in responding to these questions. Work restructuring may involve difficult decisions regarding authority, responsibility, and accountability in an organization; it can strike at the heart of traditional management practices. Successful change requires visionary leadership. As you read through the answers, try to capture our own beliefs in these areas. You need to recognize your beliefs, and to be willing to question and challenge these beliefs. Once you have familiarized yourself with the questions and answers, use the Interview Worksheet to conduct an actual interview.

The ideal consultant would make all of the points contained in the answers to the four questions in this guide. However, you will probably find that consultants will vary in the number of points they cover, take diverse approaches in addressing a given question, have differing strengths and weaknesses, and charge relatively divergent fees. In the end you will have to use your own set of criteria to select one from among the consultants you interview. Factors to consider include

- The number of points they cover,
- The relative value you place on the points the consultants either do or do not cover,
- Your ability to use other methods to address any of the issues not covered by the consultants,
- The amount of fees charged by the consultants — compared to each other and to your budget for working with consultants, and
- Your comfort level with each consultant's approach and character.

In addition, look for guidance beyond this Interview Guide. Ask each consultant to provide

- A company resume,
- Resumes of any staff they intend to use for your project,
- Summaries of their previous work, and
- A list of references.

Check to see what experience they and their staff have in your industry, with companies of comparable size, and in dealing with work restructuring needs similar to yours. If you are in a unionized site, it is important to check the consultants' experience in working in a unionized setting. Call their references and determine how satisfied clients were with the services they received. Ask about the consultant's ability to provide reliable delivery of expected results. See if the references recommend any specific controls in the consulting contract to assure execution of future plans. If possible, visit client sites and ask executives for evidence of tangible benefits delivered by the consultant — and whether the company could have done as well on its own.

It is worth the investment in time up front to ensure that your investment in work restructuring provides the dividends you are looking for.

Finally, the Comparison Chart at the back of this guide can be used to summarize the results of your interviews and information gathering for up to four consultants. The format will make it easier for you to compare the relative merits among the consultants.



QUESTIONS

When you first sit down with a consultant, you will probably start the interview by stating your needs or the problems you want addressed and asking the consultant what he or she recommends as a solution. During the discussion that follows, you will want to determine the consultant's ability to develop, facilitate, and deliver services targeted at your company's specific needs — services that will enhance the competitiveness of your firm. You should also be alert to the consultant's compatibility with your core values. To do this, you should be sure the consultant addresses the following four broad areas.

1. **Managing Change.** How will the services you provide help successfully manage our work restructuring effort? How will the services you provide enhance our internal capability to conduct future change?
2. **Enhancing Company Competitiveness.** How will the services you provide enhance the competitiveness of our company as a whole?
3. **Improving Departmental Efficiency, Quality, and Effectiveness.** How will the services you provide help improve efficiency, quality, and effectiveness at a departmental or business-process level?
4. **Increasing the Productivity and Contribution of Individual Employees.** How will the services you provide help develop individual employee potential and increase the productivity and contribution of individual employees?



ANSWERS

While every consultant's answers to these questions will vary, there are a number of key points that you should expect to hear in a competent consultant's answers.

1. Managing Change. How will the services you provide help successfully manage our work restructuring effort? How will the services you provide enhance our internal capability to conduct future change?

We provide a process for restructuring. The consultant's role should be to facilitate, but not dictate, the content of the restructuring effort. To this end, a competent consultant should have plans to provide alternative conceptual frameworks to guide the restructuring effort. If the focus is strategic planning, then the consultant should provide one or more alternative models. The same logic might apply if the focus of the change process is "Total Quality," "ISO 9000," "Learning Organization," "High Performance Work Systems," and so forth. The consultant should help management to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each approach. Once an approach is selected, the consultant should facilitate the comparison of existing management processes against this "standard." He or she should work with you to identify gaps between your company's existing practices and its chosen "standard," in order to identify strengths on which to build and areas to improve.

We enable management to lead the change process. The content of restructuring should be management-directed and not consultant-directed. A competent consultant should be prepared to

- Train management (and union leadership) to effectively lead change,
- Implement a management system that will be "self-renewing,"
- Devise mechanisms, both structural and process, to involve management and employees at all levels in identifying and implementing various restructuring efforts, and
- Provide the required training and guidance necessary to carry out the change management effort. For example, the consultant can train management and employees in using quality tools for identifying problems and analyzing processes; using communications, listening, group process, and meeting skills; and the like.

ES **We help create concrete action plans to guide the change effort.** Every restructuring effort should be guided by detailed action plans. A competent consultant should be prepared to help generate solutions and develop action plans for implementing these solutions that

- Address the high-priority issues, and, as necessary, address multiple issues at different levels simultaneously. For example, management may decide to address organizational issues (e.g., mission, vision, labor management relations, strategic planning, or a customer-focused measurement system), and cross-functional or departmental teams may address specific process improvement issues, at the same time that individual issues (such as technical skills and literacy) are addressed on a person-by-person basis.
- Address the sequence of activities. Some activities need to be addressed before others. For example, employees may have to be trained in process improvement, data collection, or group process skills before they can work on process improvement. Senior managers (and union leaders) will need training before they can lead a total quality process.

ES **We conduct periodic assessments of progress.** The work restructuring effort should be subject to the same continual improvement activities as the company's work processes. A competent consultant should be prepared to

- Conduct a formal assessment of progress on a periodic basis (e.g., annually) to identify the strengths and pitfalls of the change effort and provide recommendations to management. This assessment should be timed to precede the annual strategic planning process so that the consultant's recommendations can be used as input.
- Establish a communication system to keep all employees informed on progress made in the change effort.

ES **We help you to build an organizational infrastructure that will sustain continuous improvement.** The goal of a quality consultant is to build his or her client's capacity. A competent consultant helps the organization become self-sustaining and consultant independent. A competent consultant should be prepared to

- Define an ongoing strategic management process,
- Build a cadre of facilitators, trainers, and internal change agents who will be the "centers of profound knowledge" within the organization, and
- Develop and implement information systems to identify changes in customer requirements and market competition, in order to guide future strategic planning and improvement efforts.

2. Enhancing Company Competitiveness. How will the services you provide enhance the competitiveness of our company as a whole?

1a We ensure the change effort is driven by customer needs and providing products and services that add value and fulfill customer needs. The root of organizational success lies in meeting and exceeding customer needs and expectations. A competent consultant should have plans to

- Identify current and potential customers for the products and services that the organization offers,
- Determine, by conducting a survey or using other forms of data collection and analysis, customer needs and the extent to which these needs are being met at present,
- Identify attributes of the products and services that are of value to customers and that lead customers to make purchase and repurchase decisions,
- Evaluate the extent to which products and services offered by the company, as compared to those of competitors, meet customer needs, and
- Identify gaps between the product and service offerings of the company and customer needs, and develop an action plan to close these gaps.

1b We ensure that the organization articulates a vision and a clear, sustained strategic direction. An effective vision will reflect an understanding of current and potential markets, competitors, and customer needs. The strategy for realizing the vision forms the basis for all work restructuring efforts. Restructuring should be a strategy implementation activity. A competent consultant facilitates the creation of a vision and strategy and has plans to

- Conduct environmental scanning, competitor analysis, market positioning studies, and customer feedback studies as an empirical foundation for articulating a vision and setting a long-term strategic direction;
- Facilitate a visioning process that can help leaders develop consensus on their future direction and their core values;
- Conduct a strategic planning process to develop a business strategy;
- Analyze potential investments in facilities, plant and machinery, employees, systems development, and research and development to maintain or increase competitive advantage;
- Identify new business opportunities to grow the market or to increase market share;

- Facilitate successful deployment of the company's strategy across the entire organization; and
- Conduct annual assessments of progress in implementing the strategy.

■ **We help establish in leadership a shared responsibility for achieving the organization's vision and strategy.** The actions of senior management should guide, enable, and reinforce the work restructuring effort. A competent consultant will work with senior management to

- Establish and develop top management's leadership team (in unionized firms, this should include working with union leaders as part of the leadership team),
- Provide feedback, based on observation or measurement of leadership behavior, on inconsistencies between espoused values and actual practice,
- Devise and promote human resource practices (like hiring, promotion, incentive, and recognition practices) consistent with the organization's goals, and
- Ensure that the leadership team sets appropriate policies and develops structures and mechanisms that will enable change to occur; balance concern for customers, employees, and financial results; provide sufficient recognition; and create accountability.

■ **We ensure that work is designed, managed, and realigned into work processes to achieve organizational goals that are customer focused.** A competent consultant should assess your current work processes and be ready to

- Redefine the work of the organization in terms of a set of business processes,
- Teach process analysis and improvement skills to a core group of facilitators or trainers who will spread these tools across the organization,
- Develop measurements at the process level that reflect customer and strategic priorities,
- Reorient time and resources devoted to inspecting errors to preventing errors from happening, and
- Devise a process to develop long-term relationships with suppliers to improve supplier performance.

ES We ensure that the organization is managed on the basis of collecting and distributing information related to all aspects of organizational functioning.

Improvement requires that information is generated, shared, and communicated routinely (horizontally and vertically) throughout the entire organization as a means to maximize effectiveness. A competent consultant should assess your current work information systems and be ready to

- Develop customer information systems that can guide key business decisions (e.g., new product development, marketing strategy, process improvements, capital investment priorities),
- Devise mechanisms for sharing performance data openly and routinely throughout the organization and maintaining employee access,
- Devise effective internal and external communication systems and processes to connect employees to their suppliers and customers,
- Devise mechanisms for using emerging technologies to enhance internal and external communications and promote organizational alignment with the business strategy, and
- Use management information systems and other forms of technology in supporting continuous process improvements.

ES We ensure that organizational policies and practices are designed to empower employees and encourage them to take actions, including risks, that meet and exceed customer needs. A competent consultant should assess your current organizational policies and practices affecting employees' relationship to the organization. He or she should have plans to work with you to

- Revise or develop various organization-wide policies and incentives to empower employees to take actions that meet and exceed customer needs,
- Assess compliance with existing policies,
- Train facilitators who can act as coaches to teams,
- Devise mechanisms to obtain and use feedback from employees (e.g., effective suggestion systems, employee roundtables, "town" meetings) to enhance organizational competitiveness,
- Institute and align recognition and reward systems to organizational goals and internal and external customer requirements, and
- Develop, implement, and align accountability measures with the organization's business strategy, and focus employees on meeting organizational goals and satisfying their customers.

13 We show you how to create a learning organization. A learning organization continuously improves its performance on work processes by assessing results, identifying and implementing best practices, and continuously searching for best work methods. A competent consultant should have plans to help your company become a learning organization. He or she should be prepared to work with you to

- Develop and implement organizational processes to routinely collect, analyze, and use customer and performance data to determine progress and success;
- Identify improvement opportunities through strategic and process benchmarking against industry leaders, as well as high-performing organizations from other industries and sectors; and
- Escalate the rate of improvement by helping to create a culture that supports setting “stretch” targets (e.g., by incorporating the results of benchmarking with other firms in establishing performance objectives).

3. Improving Departmental Efficiency, Quality, and Effectiveness. How will the services you provide help improve efficiency, quality, and effectiveness at a departmental or business-process level?

ES **We ensure that the change effort at the departmental level is driven by identified customer needs.** All action in the organization should contribute to meeting customers' needs. A competent consultant should have plans to

- Identify customer requirements (for both internal and external customers) that are pertinent to the department,
- Translate these customer requirements into specific product and service outputs for the department,
- Evaluate the extent to which the current products and services offered by the department meet customer requirements, and
- Develop a measurement system that builds the "voice of the customer" into departmental performance metrics.

ES **We ensure that the department manager communicates the company's vision and long-term strategic directions to all members of the department and articulates the changes needed to align department efforts with the company's vision and strategic direction.** Your company's success requires that everyone be working toward a common goal. A competent consultant can facilitate this alignment and should have plans to

- Develop mechanisms to communicate the vision and strategic direction of the organization to all employees of the department (e.g., distributing documents or having managers conduct workshops),
- Develop an action plan to restructure the department based on the vision and strategic direction of the organization,
- Identify new product or service offerings, and
- Identify investments required in facilities, technology, employees, and systems for the department to implement the company's strategic plan.

ES **We ensure that department work processes are consistent with meeting customer requirements and achieving organizational goals.** A competent consultant should be prepared to facilitate restructuring department work processes and should work with you to

- Identify the work processes of the department;
- Document the work processes in the department;

- Train employees to think in terms of work processes, management of these work processes, and continuous improvement of the processes, rather than discrete tasks or positions;
- Train employees in process improvement tools related to re-engineering processes, such as the quality improvement process, problem solving process, and fishbone diagrams;
- Institute a system to obtain, evaluate, and reward employee suggestions for process improvements and other improvements related to the department or organization; and
- Help the department to benchmark its processes against other departments within the organization or other organizations.

We help to establish a department measurement system consistent with meeting customer requirements and organizational goals. Continual improvement requires that performance data be used to assess results and improve departmental performance. A competent consultant should assess your current measurement system and be ready to

- Identify specific outputs of the department,
- Identify the relevant attributes of the outputs to be measured, basing these attributes on customer requirements and priorities,
- Identify gaps between the current and desired measurement systems, and
- Devise a plan to close the gaps in the measurement system.

We help to establish mechanisms for collecting and disseminating information related to all aspects of departmental performance. Quality requires that information is generated, shared, and communicated routinely (horizontally and vertically) throughout the entire department to maximize departmental effectiveness. A competent consultant should be ready to

- Assess the alignment of information systems with customer requirements and business strategy;
- Assess the use of information to support fact-based decision making;
- Develop and implement processes to routinely collect, analyze, and use customer and performance data to determine progress against plans; and
- Introduce information technology to enhance process performance and to automate information collection and analysis.

For We show you how to empower the department's employees to take actions, including risks, consistent with the organization's business strategy. A competent consultant should assess your current policies and practices affecting the employees' relationship to their work. The consultant should have plans to

- Assess employees' understanding of the organization's strategy and the impact of that strategy on departmental priorities and actions,
- Implement recognition programs that encourage employees to meet customer requirements,
- Establish training and facilitate teams that will address departmental priorities and empower employees to act on team recommendations,
- Devise mechanisms to obtain and use feedback from employees to guide key decisions and improve departmental performance,
- Devise mechanisms, both formal and informal, to encourage employees to assume greater responsibility for their work and for the change process, and
- Develop and implement accountability measures that are aligned with the business strategy and help employees meet departmental goals and satisfy their customers.

4. Increasing the Productivity and Contribution of Individual Employees.

How will the services you provide help develop individual employee potential and increase the productivity and contribution of individual employees?¹

EO We ensure that management has the leadership skills, consistent with changes in work, to successfully assume new responsibilities. Work restructuring requires a new form of leadership. A competent consultant should be prepared to provide management, particularly top management, with training and other learning opportunities geared toward supporting the company's ability to restructure. The consultant should have plans to

- Develop appropriate leadership behavior and skills (through consultant coaching and feedback);
- Teach management how to act as coaches and facilitators for their subordinates;
- Get management to examine its personal behavior and change behavior that might be inconsistent with the espoused values of the organization;
- Teach management how to delegate authority and responsibility to subordinates;
- Promote management team effectiveness (through training in group process skills, listening and communicating, providing feedback, and the like);
- Develop management's facilitation and informal consulting skills;
- Deal with management's perceived loss of power, status, and confidentiality; and
- Teach management ways to enhance collaborative decision making across units.

EO We ensure that all employees have the skills and abilities, consistent with changes in work, to successfully assume new responsibilities. Work restructuring creates new performance expectations for all employees. A competent consultant should be prepared to provide all employees with training and other learning opportunities geared toward supporting the company's ability to restructure. The consultant should have plans to

- Conduct a training needs assessment to identify knowledge, skills, and competency gaps in the company's employees;
- Help each employee to develop a personal growth and skill development program that will make him or her more effective and efficient in the restructured organization;

¹For additional information on employee-related issues, see the companion National Workforce Collaborative documents on employee training, labor-management relations, and workplace literacy.

- Align performance reviews and rewards with reaching objectives set in personal growth and development plans;
- Teach departmental managers to act as coaches and facilitators for the employees in their work units;
- Teach managers to enhance collaborative decision making across units;
- Coach all employees to work collaboratively in cross-functional teams;
- Teach employees to gather customer data through surveys and focus groups;
- Teach employees methods for analyzing and using data to drive decisions;
- Teach employees to use problem solving and decision making skills, tools, and techniques;
- Promote team effectiveness through training in group process skills (e.g., listening and communicating, providing feedback); and
- Develop employees' facilitation and negotiation skills.

INTERVIEW WORKSHEET

— Feel free to make copies of the worksheet. —

Instructions: Ask each question along with the follow-up questions needed to ensure that the consultant has had an opportunity to address each of the points contained in the Answers section of the Interview Guide. Probes listed with each question should help you formulate any appropriate follow-up questions you need to ask.

- 1. Managing Change.** How will the services you provide help successfully manage our work restructuring effort? How will the services you provide enhance our internal capability to conduct future change?

Probes:

- How will you provide a process for restructuring?
- How will you enable management to lead the change process?
- How will you help create concrete action plans to guide the change effort?
- How do you conduct periodic assessments of progress?
- How will you help us to build an organizational infrastructure that will sustain continuous improvement?

2. Enhancing Company Competitiveness. How will the services you provide enhance the competitiveness of our company as a whole?

Probes:

- How will you ensure that the change effort is driven by customer needs and providing products and services that add value and fulfill customer needs?
- How will you ensure that the organization articulates a vision and a clear, sustained strategic direction?
- How will you help establish a shared responsibility in leadership for achieving the organization's vision and strategy?
- How will you ensure that work is designed, managed, and realigned into work processes to achieve organizational goals that are customer focused?
- How will you ensure that the organization is managed on the basis of collecting and distributing information related to all aspects of organizational functioning?
- How will you ensure that organizational policies and practices are designed to empower employees and encourage them to take actions, including risks, that meet and exceed customer needs?
- How will you help us create a learning organization?

3. Improving Departmental Efficiency, Quality, and Effectiveness. How will the services you provide help improve efficiency, quality, and effectiveness at a departmental or business-process level?

Probes:

- How will you ensure that the change effort at the departmental level is driven by customer needs?
- How will you ensure that the department manager communicates the company's vision and long-term strategic directions to all members of the department and articulates the changes needed to align department efforts with the company's vision and strategic direction?
- How will you ensure that department work processes are consistent with meeting customer requirements and achieving organizational goals?
- How will you help to establish a department measurement system consistent with meeting customer requirements and organizational goals?
- How will you help to establish mechanisms for collecting and disseminating information related to all aspects of departmental performance?
- How will you help to empower the department's employees to take actions, including risks, consistent with the organization's business strategy?

4. Increasing the Productivity and Contribution of Individual Employees.

How will the services you provide help develop individual employee potential and increase the productivity and contribution of individual employees?

Probes:

- How will you ensure that top management has the leadership skills, consistent with changes in work, to successfully assume new responsibilities?
- How will you ensure that all employees have the skills and abilities, consistent with changes in work, to successfully assume new responsibilities?

COMPARISON CHART

— Feel free to make copies of the Comparison Chart. —

Directions: Put the name of each consultant interviewed in the boxes at the top of the four right-hand columns. Use the notes from your Interview Worksheets with these consultants to place a check mark in the boxes corresponding to the issues that the different consultants covered. Add up the number of issues covered by each consultant. Also note whether the consultants' corporate resume, staff resumes, previous work summaries, and references demonstrate quality and experience, and then note the consultants' costs. In comparing consultants, do not rely solely on the totals. Be sure to compare which issues the consultants did and did not cover, whether you can address the points not covered by a consultant, whether the consultants' materials demonstrate quality and relevant experience, and what program costs are.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS				
1. Managing Change				
- Provides a process for restructuring.				
- Enables management to lead the process.				
- Creates concrete action plans.				
- Conducts periodic assessments of progress.				
- Builds an organizational infrastructure for continuous improvement.				
2. Enhancing Company Competitiveness				
- Ensures that change effort is driven by customer needs.				
- Ensures that organization articulates a vision and a clear strategic direction.				
- Establishes in leadership a shared responsibility for achieving the vision and strategy.				
- Ensures that work processes achieve customer-focused organizational goals.				
- Ensures that organization is managed on the basis of collecting and distributing information.				
- Ensures that organizational policies and practices are designed to empower employees.				
- Creates a learning organization.				

3. Improving Departmental Efficiency, Quality, and Effectiveness				
- Ensures that departmental-level change effort is driven by customer needs.				
- Ensures that department manager communicates the company's vision and long-term strategic directions.				
- Ensures that department work processes are consistent with customer requirements and organizational goals.				
- Establishes a department measurement system consistent with customer requirements and organizational goals.				
- Establishes mechanisms for collecting and disseminating departmental performance information.				
- Empowers the department's employees to take actions.				
4. Increasing the Productivity and Contribution of Individual Employees				
- Ensures that management has the necessary leadership skills.				
- Ensures that all employees have the necessary skills and abilities.				
TOTAL POINTS				
MATERIALS DEMONSTRATE EXPERIENCE AND QUALITY				
- Corporate resume				
- Staff resumes				
- Previous work summaries				
- References				
COST				

This
GUIDE IN CONTEXT

Work restructuring is just one of a number of workforce and workplace changes that companies are undertaking to remain competitive in today's global economy. For many companies, staying profitable involves adopting new technologies; redefining the relationship between employers and employees; and upgrading employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities; as well as restructuring work processes.

All of these changes are interrelated. New machines frequently require new work processes if they are to be fully used. New work processes can lead to changes in the locus of decision making and redefinitions of the roles of both labor and management. And training in a variety of skills, including basic reading, writing, and mathematics, is almost always necessary to put any other changes into place successfully.

The National Workforce Assistance Collaborative has prepared a series of guidebooks to help small and mid-sized companies select the high-quality service providers and products they need to undertake successful workforce and workplace changes, including

- *Employee Training Interview Guide: Judging the Quality and Effectiveness of Training Providers,*
- *Employee Training Product Checklist: Judging the Quality of Training Products,*
- *Labor-Management Interview Guide: Judging the Quality and Effectiveness of Labor-Management Relations Consultants,*
- *Resource Guide: A Key to Organizations Working in Employee Training, Labor-Management Relations, Work Restructuring, and Workplace Literacy,*
- *Work Restructuring Interview Guide: Judging the Quality and Effectiveness of Work Restructuring Consultants,*
- *Workplace Literacy Interview Guide: Judging the Quality and Effectiveness of Literacy Providers, and*
- *Workplace Literacy Product Checklist: Judging the Quality of Workplace Literacy Products.*

Additional Collaborative publications designed for small and mid-sized businesses and the service providers working with them include the following:

Resource Listings

- *Workplace Literacy Publications: An Annotated Bibliography of Print Resources* — A workplace literacy bibliography,

Newsletters

- *Workforce Briefs* — A newsletter series for businesses,
- *Business Assistance Notes* — A newsletter series for service providers,

Tools for Companies

- *Pay-for-Knowledge* — A how-to guide on the development and implementation of a pay-for-knowledge system,
- *Computer-Based Training* — A guide for selecting computer-based training products and services,

Tools for Service Providers

- *Integrated Service Delivery* — A publication providing insights into the best methods for delivering integrated services to small and mid-sized companies,
- *Delivering Cost Effective Services to Small and Mid-Sized Companies: A Guide for Workforce and Workplace Development Providers* — A publication highlighting proven approaches for delivering cost-effective services to small and mid-sized companies,
- *Approaches to Forming a Learning Consortium: A Guide for Service Providers* — A how-to guide on forming learning consortia,
- *Marketing to Businesses* — Information on how to identify and effectively market services to a local business community,
- *Assessing an Organization's Training Needs* — A generic training needs assessment accompanied by instructions on how to approach and "market" the value of training to small and mid-sized business leaders,
- *Assessing the Value of Workforce Training* — An introduction to assessing the value of training programs, focusing on quick and easy strategies,

Internet Services

- *Internet Listserv* — An electronic forum for discussing workforce and workplace development issues. To subscribe to NWAC-L, send an e-mail message to LISTSERV@PSUVM.PSU.EDU saying "subscribe NWAC-L [YourFirstName YourLastName]."
- *Gopher Server* — Online access to materials and products produced by the Collaborative. The Gopher Server address is INFO.PSU.EDU. Open "Information Servers at Penn State," then "Research Centers and Institutes," and
- *World Wide Web Home Page* — Information on the Collaborative and its products and services, as well as links to related information on the Internet (<http://www.psu.edu/institutes/nwac>).

All Collaborative publications can be ordered through the National Alliance of Business Distribution Center, listed on the inside front cover, or downloaded from the Collaborative's Internet Gopher Server or World Wide Web home page.

ADVISORY GROUPS

Stephen Mitchell
Project Director

Terri Bergman
Products and Services Manager

BOARD

Chair

Roberts T. Jones
National Alliance of Business

Eunice Askov
Institute for the Study of Adult
Literacy, The Pennsylvania State
University

William L. Batt, Jr.
Consultant

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Human Resource Development
Institute

Clair Brown
University of California

Robert Fien
Stone Construction Equipment, Inc.

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National Governors' Association

Marshall Goldberg
The Alliance for Employee Growth &
Development, Inc.

Andy Hartman
National Institute for Literacy

Cathy Kramer
Association for Quality and
Participation

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American Association of Community
Colleges

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The Modernization Forum

Benjamin Schneider
University of Maryland

Dennis Sienko
Consultant

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International Association of Machinists

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Council for Adult and Experiential
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National Labor-Management
Association

Benjamin Tregoe
Kepner-Tregoe, Inc.

Thomas Tuttle
Maryland Center for Quality and
Productivity

Joan Wills
Institute for Educational Leadership

John Zimmerman
MCI

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Chair

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Council for Adult and Experiential
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Phyllis Eisen
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Western Massachusetts Chapter
National Tooling & Machining
Association

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Upper Mid-West Manufacturing
Technology Center

Dan Hull
The Center for Occupational Research
and Development

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Technologies

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US West

Alfred Moye
Hewlett Packard

Frederic Nichols
National Coalition for Advanced
Manufacturing

Joan Patterson
UAW/Chrysler National Training Center

Paula Reeder
Phoenix Associates

Martha Reesman
National Center for Manufacturing
Sciences

Lee M. Shrader, Jr.
Great Lakes Manufacturing
Technology Center

Duc-Le To
U.S. Department of Education

LABOR-MANAGEMENT RELATIONS

Chair

Hugh Trantum
National Labor-Management
Association

Nick Argona
Xerox Corporation

William L. Batt, Jr.
Consultant

Betty Bednarczyk
SEIU-Local 13

Barry Bluestone
University of Massachusetts

Rena Cross
Foamade Industries

Joel Cutcher-Gershenfield
Michigan State University

David Fontaine
Maryland Alliance for Labor-
Management Cooperation

Pat France
Stark County Labor-Management
Council

Robert Frey
The CIN-MADE Corporation

Maria Heidkamp
Wisconsin Labor-Management Council

Edsel Jones
Mapleton Local No. 7-7807

Robert Landsman
New York State School of Industrial
and Labor Relations

Malcolm Lovell
National Planning Association

Charlene Powell
Kentucky Association of Labor-
Management Committees

John Stepp
Restructuring Associates

Brian Turner
Work and Technology Institute

Earl Willford
Bureau of Mediation Services

WORK RESTRUCTURING

Chair

Thomas Tuttle
Maryland Center for Quality and
Productivity

Eileen Appelbaum
Economic Policy Institute

Mike Beyerlein
The Center for the Study of Work
Teams

Jane Reese Coulbourne
Restructuring Associates, Inc.

John Dodd
Computer Science Corporation

Ned Ellington
Productivity and Quality Center

Michael Galiasso
Regional Manufacturing Institute

Debbie Goldman
Communications Workers of America

Michelle Griffin
U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Bruce Herman
Garment Industry Development
Corporation

Robert King
Goal/QPC

Vaughn Limbrick
Society for Human Resource
Management

Peter Manella
New York State Department of
Economic Development

Arley Mead
Harford Systems, Inc.

Robert Meyer
Work in Northeast Ohio

Joe Rigali
Sanden International, USA

Maureen Sheahan
Labor-Management Council for
Economic Renewal

Peggy Siegel
National Alliance of Business

Audrey Theis
Townson State

Edwin Toussaint
Xerox Corporation

WORKPLACE LITERACY

Chair

Eunice Askov
Institute for the Study of Adult
Literacy, The Pennsylvania State
University

Judith Alamprese
COSMOS Corporation

Lorraine Amico
National Governors' Association

Dale Brandenburg
Wayne State University

Jinx (Helen) Crouch
Literacy Volunteers of America

Regina Guaraldi
Miami-Dade Community College

Karl O. Haigler
The Salem Company

Mary Ann Jackson
Wisconsin Technical College Board

Inaam Mansoor
REEP

Donna Miller-Parker
State Board for Community and
Technical Colleges

Michael O'Brian
CertainTeed Corporation

James Parker
U.S. Department of Education

James Ryan
District 1199C

Anthony Sarmiento
AFL-CIO

Johan Uvin
Massachusetts Adult and Community
Learning Services

Robert Visdos
NETWORK

Jo Ann Weinberger
Center for Literacy, Inc.

NATIONAL WORKFORCE ASSISTANCE

COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS

NATIONAL ALLIANCE OF BUSINESS

National Office

1201 New York Avenue, NW
Suite 700
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 800 787-2848
Fax: 202 289-2875
e-mail: info@NAB.COM

Atlantic Office

317 George Street
New Brunswick, NJ 08901
Phone: 908 524-1110
Fax: 908 524-6275

Capital Area Office

1201 New York Avenue, NW
Suite 700
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 202 289-2897
Fax: 202 289-2875

Central Office

9400 N. Central Expressway
Suite 606
Dallas, TX 75231
Phone: 214 373-0854
Fax: 214 373-1941

Midwest Office

1 East Wacker Drive
Suite 2410
Chicago, IL 60601
Phone: 312 595-2100
Fax: 312 595-2101

Northeast Office

1 McKinley Square
Suite 600
Boston, MA 02109
Phone: 617 624-4190
Fax: 617 624-4195

Southeast Office

1 Midtown Plaza
1360 Peachtree Street, NE
Suite 710
Atlanta, GA 30309
Phone: 404 881-0061
Fax: 404 881-0006

Western Office

800 Wilshire Boulevard
Suite 960
Los Angeles, CA 90017
Phone: 213 488-9153
Fax: 213 488-9460

COUNCIL FOR ADULT AND EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

243 South Wabash Avenue
Suite 800
Chicago, IL 60604
Phone: 312 922-5909
Fax: 312 922-1769

Philadelphia Office

Delaware Valley Industrial Resource Center
12265 Townsend Road
Suite 500
Philadelphia, PA 19154
Phone: 215 969-1286
Fax: 215 969-6652

INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF ADULT LITERACY

The Pennsylvania State University
College of Education
204 Calder Way
Suite 209
University Park, PA 16801
Phone: 814 863-3777
Fax: 814 863-6108

MARYLAND CENTER FOR QUALITY AND PRODUCTIVITY

CMB/SPA Building
4th Floor
University of Maryland
College Park, MD 20742
Phone: 301 405-7099
Fax: 301 314-9119

NATIONAL LABOR-MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 819
Jamestown, NY 14702
Phone: 800 967-2687
Fax: 716 665-8060



NATIONAL
ALLIANCE OF
BUSINESS

1201 New York Avenue, NW
Suite 700
Washington, DC 20005
800/787-2848

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